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A WORD TO LADS

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ON

TOBACCO.

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A WORD TO LADS ON TOBACCO.

DEAR BOYS, *Tobacco is a poison.* Here is a fact in proof. James Tenny was about eight years old, when a visitor to his father's house gave him a bright penny as he was going to bed, and he lay awake part of the night thinking what he should buy with it in the morning. That penny proved his ruin. He went early as the sun rose to a grocery and called for sugar-plums. The mischievous clerk told him he had no plums, but he had something better which he would give him. He took a piece of tobacco, coated it thick with sugar, and told the little boy to put it into his mouth and swallow it right down. He did so, and in a few minutes he began to feel the fatal effects of the poisonous weed. He ran home as fast as he could; but his sickness increased

with every step, and deadly pale, and trembling with fear, he frightened his parents and friends by telling them he had swallowed something bad. They soon found it was tobacco. The physicians were called, the stomach-pump used, and other remedies, but all in vain. Nature vainly roused all her forces to rescue him; in the struggle the blood burst from his fingers and toes, and his body was convulsed with spasms. In two hours and a half the child died a victim to tobacco, and to the vile practical joke of a tobacco chewer.

But it told the tale of the poisonous nature of this mean Indian plant, which no creature is foolish enough to eat but depraved man, except the loathsomest sort of a green worm, and the ugliest species of African goat. Every body in the village cried out against the clerk, and his master turned him away. Many persons gave up chewing and smoking and snuffing; but in a little while they forgot the warning, and went at it again.

So powerful are the charms of this foul narcotic that health and long life are sacrificed to it by millions.

Dr. Dan King says there are three poisonous chemicals in tobacco, one alkaloid and two oils. "A single drop of either of the oils put upon the tongue of a cat kills her in two minutes, and a single grain of the alkaloid is sufficient to kill instantly the strongest mastiff." And now do you suppose, my dear lads, that a man can chew this drug and smoke it every day without injuring himself? No. The fact is, that whole nations are made sickly by its use; numerous diseases may be directly traced to it, and many disorders to which men are liable are rendered incurable by its disturbing effects on the system.

Professor John Lizars, M. D., a distinguished physician and surgeon of Edinburgh, Scotland, says that tobacco creates ulcers on the lips, the tongue, gums, cheeks, and tonsils; it produces giddiness, vomiting, dyspepsia, looseness of the bowels, diarrhea, diseased liver, congestion of the

brain, apoplexy, palsy, madness, loss of memory, blindness, deafness, nervousness, feebleness and cowardice. You may take strychine, which comes from nux vomica, a deadly poison, and its effects if taken in very small doses will not be felt at first; but in a few days you will find out that something terrible has got into your system. Indeed, it is absurd to think that any nation can be healthy where the custom of using tobacco is general. The American people are a very sickly people, and the Indian tribes have nearly dwindled away, and no doubt tobacco is one of the principal causes. Spain was once a great nation; but she is now a vast tobacco shop, and of no moral value in the world. The Germans are smoking and drinking themselves into stupidity, and the English are following the same bad example. As to the Turks, and other semi-civilized nations of the globe, they are only beacons of ruin to warn the Christian world not to follow in their wake. Opium, rum, and tobacco are blasting the bodies and souls of all the nations

of the globe; and we call upon the pure and innocent boys and girls now coming upon the stage of life to form an army of heroic reformers to rescue the world from a dreadful future.

2. *The use of tobacco in any form is ridiculous in appearance.*—When Columbus was making discoveries in the West Indies he anchored in a harbor of Cuba one day, and sent two men up into the island to see the people and make a report to him. They returned, and reported among other things that they saw "the naked savages twist large leaves together, light one end in the fire and smoke like devils." The way they smoked, and the way they taught our ancestors to smoke, was to drink in the smoke, and, shutting the mouth, let it gush out of both nostrils. Sure enough, they must have looked like devils on fire doing it this way!

One day Sir Walter Raleigh, who was the first, or one of the first, to introduce smoking into England, was alone at an inn "drinking tobacco" as they called it, when his servant came

into the room, and seeing his master surrounded by smoke, and the smoke gushing out of his nostrils, he took it that Sir Walter was on fire, seized a pail of water, and dashed it upon his head! Henry Ward Beecher describes a cigar as "a roll of tobacco with a fire at one end and a fool at the other." Rowlands, an old author, in his "Knave of Hearts," says of a prodigal:

"In a tobacco shop resembling hell,
(Fire, stink, and smoke must be where devils dwell,)
He sits; you cannot see his face for vapor;
Offering to Pluto with a tallow taper."

Dr. Adam Clarke hated tobacco. He said if he were to offer a sacrifice to the devil it would be a pig stuffed with tobacco!

But of all the forms of using tobacco the most ludicrous is snuffing. A lively writer thus comments upon it: "Snuff-taking is an odd custom. If we came suddenly upon it in a foreign country it would make us split our sides with laughter. A grave gentleman takes a little casket out of his pocket, puts a finger and a thumb in, brings

away a pinch of a sort of powder, and then with the most serious air possible, as if he were doing one of the most important transactions of his life, (for even with the most indifferent snuff-takers there is a certain look of importance,) proceeds to thrust and keeps thrusting it at his nose; after which he shakes his head, or his waistcoat, or his nose itself, or all three in the style of a man who has done his duty, and satisfied the most serious claim of his well-being. There is a species of long-armed snuff-takers; these perform the operation in a style of potent and elaborate preparation ending with a sudden activity. But a smaller and rounder man sometimes attempts it. He first puts his head on one side, then stretches forth the arm with pinch in hand, then brings round his hand as a snuff-taking elephant might his trunk, and finally shakes snuff, head, and nose together in a sudden vehemence of convulsion, his eyebrows all the while lifted up as if to make room for the onset, and when he has ended, he draws himself back

to the perpendicular, and generally proclaims the victory he has won over the insipidity of the previous moment by a sniff and a great "Hah!"

Well might such ecstatic delights lead one almost to concentrate his aspirations for happiness on his olfactory organs, and to make his nose the shrine of his chief devotions. Alfred Crowquill, in Miss Sheridan's Comic Offering for 1834, thus apostrophizes his nose:

"Knows he that never took a pinch,
Nosey, the pleasure thence which flows?
Knows he the titillating joys
Which my nose knows?

"O nose! I am as proud of thee
As any mountain of its snows;
I gaze on thee, and feel that pride
A Roman knows!"

F. W. Fairholt, F. S. A., a friend to the weed, from whose work on tobacco I quote the above, says that Lord Stanhope once made an estimate of the time wasted by a snuff-taker of forty years' standing, and he concluded that two years of

his life would be dedicated to tickling his nose and two years more to blowing it! Time well spent, our learned author might allow, for he seems to think the Indian weed the greatest plant outside of Paradise. But what sensible boy that reads this will not rejoice that this disgusting treatment of the nose is going out of vogue, under the irresistible lash of ridicule and contempt. An old lady who was weak enough to love snuff, and to hope it did not do her any harm, asked her physician if snuff ever injured folks' brains. "Not in the least, madam," said he, "for folks who have any brains don't use it."

3. *It is a filthy practice.*—What can be more dirty than to fill one's nose with black or brown dust, and then to sneeze it out on the air, or drizzle it out on a handkerchief? It is not merely "making a dust-pan of the nose," but a sink drain! And how much better is it to keep a black quid in your mouth, making you drool so plentifully that you must keep up a perpetual spitting in peril of swallowing what would

destroy life. The smell of a Havana cigar may become fragrant to one accustomed to it, but it leaves the mouth sour and the breath offensive; while the smoke infects the clothes, the hair, the room, and growing old, it becomes putrid and disagreeable. And what is more disagreeable than old tobacco smoke? Not the smell of the charnel house itself. And the white spit of smokers, though not so acrid and nauseous as the brown juice of tobacco chewed, is utterly disgusting to every unitiated beholder.

How intolerable this nuisance in a rail car, or an office, or store! Much more so in a kitchen or sitting-room, or pew at the church. And not to be offensive to others, the chewer or smoker must put himself often to the inconvenience of doing without his customary inspiration at a time when he feels the need of it most; and if he cannot or will not do without it, and at the same time wishes to avoid being a nuisance, what can he do? O what shifts have tobacco chewers had to make sometimes! A man sitting with his wife

and other ladies in a strange church, and listening with delight to a popular speaker, all unconsciously, by the force of habit, put a piece of tobacco into his mouth. Of course it was but a little while before he had to look round for a spittoon; but, alas! there was none in the pew. He then thought of his handkerchief, but he had a nice new one which his wife had lately given him, and he could not think of spitting in that. He bore his trouble as long as he could. At length he got up suddenly, opened the pew door and went out, without saying a word to his wife, for he could not speak. Much to his chagrin she immediately followed him, thinking he was taken ill. He scarcely reached the street door before his distended mouth burst, and the contents flew out right in the eyes of a little dog that ran up to meet him! Just then his wife put her hand on his shoulder and said tenderly, "What is the matter, husband? Are you sick?"

"O, wife," said he, "what did you come out for? I only came out here to spit, and if you

had not come I could have slipped back again; but now what would the congregation think?"

But every man will not take such pains to avoid giving offense. Many will spit in a corner of a pew, in the passage way of a car, or under the seat; and every lady that comes in will be in danger of soiling her skirts—oftentimes spoiling a costly dress. O filthy Americans! I have often exclaimed aloud as I have had to sit down in a car over a puddle of foul saliva.

But what shall the poor votary of tobacco do? He can't get the window of the car open perhaps, and if he don't chew he is miserable, and so he makes up his mind to be impolite. "Ladies," said a smoker as he entered the stage coach, "I hope my cigar will not be offensive?"

"Yes, yes, sir," was the reply; "it will be very offensive."

He nodded, and said drily, "It is so to some," and went on with his smoking. No doubt in their hearts the ladies voted him a nuisance and no gentleman.

Said the celebrated Daniel Webster, "If young gentlemen must smoke, let them take to the horse-shed." Think, my boys, of the degradation of resorting to a horse-shed or a cow-yard to enjoy your sweetest luxury, the semi-intoxication of tobacco! How can a pure-minded youth put himself into a position to be sneered at. A Scotch physician says: "My father had a great objection to smoking; but when I thought he was not likely to find it out I used to smoke a cigar. One day, just as I was turning the corner of a street, to my mortification I met him. Without saying a word, he looked askance, *and walked round me in a semicircular direction.* That cured me of smoking, and he never caught me at it again." A writer who relates this remarks, "I hope fathers of Yankee boys who smoke will take a semicircle around them and effect a cure."

4. *It is a moral slavery.*—"I would as soon be a slave on a plantation," said Dr. Woods, "as a slave to tobacco!" Slavery is a condition in

which you are constrained to do what you feel is inconvenient or unhealthy, or uncleanly or expensive. If smoking and chewing were free from all these evils it would be no harm to smoke or chew; but when the tobacco user feels or foresees all these evils, and yet, by the cravings of an unnatural appetite, is compelled to practice it on peril of uneasiness or mental vacancy at first, and afterward of prostration, delirium, consumption, or even death, that man is a slave; he is obliged to do what he dreads to do. Rev. George Trask, of Fitchburg, Mass., whose almost solitary toil for years as a pioneer in this reform will render his name immortal, says: "I know one who said, 'Sir, I can hear no more; for all you say of this drug is true, and cuts me in pieces. I have been a slave to it twenty years, and shall die a slave; but if my son uses it I will disinherit him!'" He mentions also the case of a clergyman who was striving to reclaim a drunkard, when the drunkard turned upon him and said, "If you will give up your snuff I will give up

my rum." It was agreed to; but in less than forty-eight hours the clergyman was in perfect anguish for his snuff. He set a spy over the drunkard to watch for his downfall; and when told that the fatal cup had passed his lips, he flew to his snuff-box with the fury of a maniac, made himself idiotic, and died a fool.

The interesting writer of "Stories on Tobacco for American Lads," calling himself Uncle Toby, says: "I know an excellent clergyman who assures me he sometimes weeps like a child when putting a quid to his mouth, under a sense of degradation and bondage to this filthy poison. I know a distinguished teacher in the State of Maine who for some time debated the question, 'Shall I commit suicide by using tobacco, which I know is killing me, or shall I give it up and live?'" How he decided the question is not stated; but how sad that any educated man should be so degraded as to hesitate on a question like that! Now, my lads, you see where you will be some years hence if you commence

and keep on smoking. You will be enveloped in the folds of a serpent which will charm you more and more as he presses you closer and closer in his foul and fatal embrace. I entreat you, for the sake of others, for your soul's sake, to declare your freedom while you yet have power to maintain it.

5. *It blights and blasts the intellect.*—The mind is dependent for its manifestations upon its subtle and mysterious connections with the nervous system; if that system is disordered or enfeebled, especially if the brain is diseased, the mind is almost as much affected by it as if it were itself material. To keep the mind ever growing and vigorous the nerves must be kept in a healthy condition. Now a narcotic or stimulant produces at first an excitement of the nerves which exhilarates the mind and rouses it to action; but it sinks again as much lower when the artificial excitement is over, and to rouse it again requires a repetition of the process, and finally the mind loses its power of self-inspiration, and depends

upon the stimulus altogether; and as an increase of the stimulus is needed to raise it to the same pitch of activity, it evidently tends toward complete prostration by the exhaustion of the latent nervous energy. By degrees every power goes to decay; the imagination becomes dim, the memory falters, and the reasoning powers lose their grasp of the subtle connections of thought. But this is not all; by the poisonous influence of tobacco the brain in many cases becomes so diseased that insanity ensues. Even small boys have made themselves maniacs by excessive smoking and chewing.

"I was once," says Uncle Toby, "on the banks of one of our New England rivers, where tobacco growers are beginning to abound. One of the number proposed to show me a youth on whom the poison had done fearful execution! Having a leisure hour, I went with him to the house where the parents of the young wretch live. Though considerably advanced in life, they seemed busy, rational, hale, and happy, and will

outlive, I dare say, a thousand young men along that river who already have the marks of age impressed upon their features by the free use of this poison.

"I had been seated but a moment when I heard strange sounds over my head; strange indeed! Whether it was groaning, sighing, singing, shouting, sporting, howling, or any thing human or inhuman, I could not divine; but whatever it may have been it lasted but a moment, and was simply a preparation for something more blood-stirring!

"All on a sudden James Dixey, the young maniac, was in motion; he rattled down the staircase, and whirled around the room with the fury of a tornado!

"His eyes were distended, wild, and flashing fire! His skin was greasy, and the hue of dirty brass, or a boiled chicken! His muscles were distorted, his hair clotted, and his attitude, expression and all, was obscene and awfully loathsome!

"The tobacco demon, (I believe tobacco hath a devil, and the devil hath it,) I say the tobacco demon, who had possession of this mad boy was by no means bashful or retiring; he planted his victim by my side in a moment, and with a full fiendish gaze in my face he cried out tobacco! tobacco! with an unearthly scream, that seemed to well-nigh raise the roof!

"Much followed that I must not record. Suffice it to say, that on the top of his scream for tobacco he put questions too horrid to bear recital.

"Before leaving the place I made myself acquainted with the history of James Dixey, so far as his being made a maniac by tobacco was concerned. I was told he would smoke day and night without cessation if allowed; that the family were obliged to keep matches away from him, or his smoking operations would wrap them all in flames at midnight!

"Tobacco he would have at any rate. When not furnished by his parents he would beg it

from door to door. When he could not beg it he would steal it. When he could not get it in one town he would go to another; and there was no peace day nor night beneath the roof when the young maniac was out of tobacco."

6. *Tobacco will destroy the soul.*—I do not say that this will be the case always, for God is merciful, and the times of our ignorance he winks at. Nevertheless, every one in this day of light that uses the poisonous and filthy weed as a luxury may well doubt whether he is accepted with God. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that which he alloweth." "He that doubteth is damned if he eat." Perhaps it was a serious doubt like this that made an old Christian woman, addicted to the use of the pipe, dream as she did one night. She thought that she died, and her spirit went up to the gate of heaven and knocked for admission.

St. Peter came to the door with the keys and asked her who she was, and what she wanted. She said she was a Christian, and she wanted to come in. He requested an angel that stood by to go and see if her name was in the Book of Life. He soon returned and said there was no such name there. "Not there!" she exclaimed. "You must be mistaken; do go again and see." She was so earnest about it the kind angel went, but he returned again with a pensive countenance and said, "I am sorry, my good woman, but I really cannot find your name in the book." "Not find it! It *is* there," said she, addressing herself with emphasis to St. Peter, "for I have been a Christian these fifty years, and have had the witness of the Spirit." St. Peter begged the angel to try again. He went, and returned soon with an altered countenance, and said, "I have found it at last, but it was so covered up with tobacco smoke I could scarcely see it." She awoke and found herself in tears, and from that day she smoked no more, for she took her dream

as a warning from God. Indeed, her honest doubt probably wrought out through the imagination this vision, and so it was a natural, if not a supernatural, warning from God.

But it is not merely as a wrong practice that stimulating with tobacco endangers our prospect of eternal life; but as putting the mind in a state of exhilaration sometimes bordering on intoxication, which must be unfriendly to the inspirations of the Holy Ghost and the sweet influences of grace. Moreover, carnal excitements preoccupy the mind, and satisfy it without the holy raptures of religion. "Be not drunk with wine," said an Apostle, "wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit!" If the Indian weed had been the popular luxury of that day I make no doubt the Apostle would have said, "Take care how you mingle with your spiritual offerings the smoke of that foul and pestilential weed!" Not only are Christians injured in their religious enjoyment by this heathenish indulgence, but many are tempted by it not to become Christians.

They are convicted by a sermon or by a solemn Providence, and they experience a desire to become the subjects of divine grace and pardon; but as they leave the house of God, by the force of habit they take the cigar or the quid, and the soothing influence of the narcotic steals over their senses, and they become indifferent to the warnings which they have heard. Many a ship has been wrecked because the man at the helm was made all too easy about the surrounding perils by the syren charms of the deceitful opiate. So, many a soul is wrecked on the shoals of indifference and inertia that might have been saved. There is probably at this moment no greater hinderance to the cause of religion and morality than tobacco.

Lately I was taken by a policeman to see the mysteries of iniquity in one of our large cities, and the most striking exhibition of depravity which I beheld was young girls in the dancing saloons smoking their long nines! It stamped in the memory the unholy alliance of tobacco

with rum and lust in the ruin of immortal souls.

But I must hasten to the conclusion. The trumpet of battle is now sounding against this species of intemperance. Henceforth every one will have to take sides. I call upon all the boys in the land to enlist under the banner of perfect purity in all things. For those who have not formed the taste for tobacco, it will be easy to resolve never to touch the accursed thing, except to throw it into the fire or into the sea; and for those who unhappily have begun the practice, it is never too late to break off in the name of God while yet they are young and growing. Even old men, by a resolute will and the help of Christ, have been able to break the bondage of many years. An old Christian, somewhat hard of hearing, coming home from a church meeting, where the subject of tobacco had been under consideration, commenced filling his pipe; when his son, who had been present at the meeting, said,

"Father, what are you doing?"

"Why, I am going to have a smoke."

"But, father, did you not say in the church, just now, that you would renounce the use of tobacco?"

"Was that what they were talking about? I could not hear; I saw others get up, and so I did, as I didn't want to be odd."

"Well," said the son, "you voted away your tobacco."

"Very well, then," said the old man, "here it goes!" and he threw it as far as he could; and he has never tasted of tobacco from that time.

He is a hero. As it regards that Church, they have ever since had extraordinary prosperity in religion. Such things can be done and will be, all over the Christian world, before the millennium comes.

I end by quoting a rare piece of poetry by an author known to me only by his initials, J. S., showing how the curse of tobacco has fallen upon

the white man for his crime of poisoning the Indian races by the fire-waters; expressing the hope that this sort of vengeance may end here, and that opium may not come after tobacco to punish the Western nations for their corruption of the Children of the Sun by nicotine and alcohol.

"An Indian sat in a thoughtful mood,
With vengeance on his brow;
His heart beat quick, and fired his blood
To launch a terrible blow!

"'I'll be avenged! The proud pale face
Shall all my vengeance feel;
I'll run him down in a hunter's chase
With weapons worse than steel.

"'He stole my lands! he drove me away!
And with fire-water cursed!
The game—it is mine to end the play,
And his shall be the worst.

" 'My weapons are in this box and bale,
To be snuffed and chewed and smoked;
To be welcomed with wine and rum and ale,
With every evil yoked.

" 'Go, poisonous weed! the pale face curse;
Go, stab him to the heart!
Then tell him to call an Indian nurse
To ply the healer's art!

" 'Ugh! I'll wire his nerves, and lay them bare
To every sweeping wind;
And fire his brain, till demons glare
On his excited mind.

" 'His heart, oppressed like a lab'ring wheel,
Shall stop and rush by turns;
While a sluggish stupor warps his will,
Or hell within him burns.

" 'To a quenchless thirst, and clouded mind,
I'll add a fetid breath;
Make him to every disease incline—
An easy prey to death.'

"Thus the Indian weed shall his wrongs redress,
In the old savage way;
Till Indian and pale face dwell in peace,
And for each other pray."

THE END.

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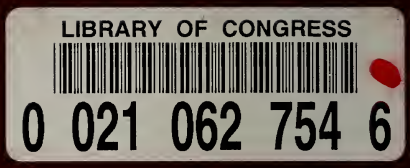
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